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ABSTRACT

Pre-Referral Consultation (PRC) is a category of student referral separate from the conventional special education referral, through which any person can refer for help--any student who may be in crisis, falling through the cracks, or otherwise at risk. It exemplifies the integration of special education personnel into the general education system. This paper reviews Birmingham Groves High School's PRC program, a component of the school's outreach special education delivery system which the Michigan State Board of Education recognizes as a model program. Aspects of PRC implementation covered are: the importance of administrative support; rationale and legalities; documentation; streamlined referral process; efficient staffings; PRC team members; obtaining parent consent/involvement; interventions and alternatives; mobilization of staff; providing service; evaluation of outcomes; closure of service; and follow-up. Included in this paper are a counselor's referral packet, a pre-referral screening form to be filled out by student's general education teachers, a referral-to-placement flow chart, a description of general education driven student support service, a PRC contract/consent form, and a PRC summary report form. Potential benefits include more appropriate referrals, less time spent in meetings and writing unnecessary evaluations, improved academics, reduced numbers of disciplinary cases, improved staff morale, shared responsibility between special and general education, and the integration of special education expertise into mainstream. (Author/BHK)

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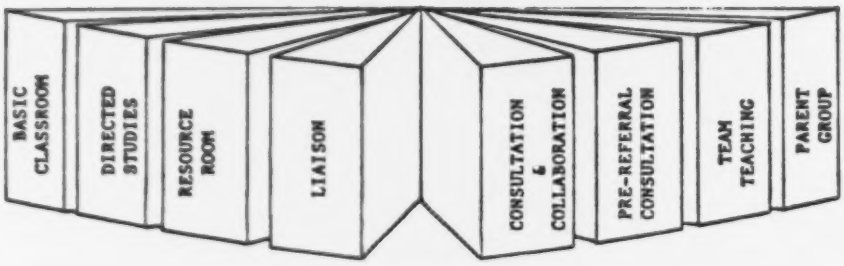
# Pre-Referral Consultation: Successful Intervention for At-risk Youth

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200 Word Abstract for ERIC/CAPS

Pre-Referral Consultation: Successful Intervention for At-Risk Youth
by Janet L. Armil, M.S., Birmingham Public Schools

Pre-Referral Consultation (P.R.C.) is a category of student referral separate from the conventional special education referral through which any person can refer for help any student who may be in crisis, falling through the cracks, or otherwise at-risk. It exemplifies the integration of special education personnel into the general education system. This paper reviews Birmingham Groves High School's P.R.C. program, just one component of its outreach special education delivery system which the Michigan State Board of Education recognizes as a model program.

Aspects of P.R.C. implementation covered are: The importance of administrative support, rationale and legalities, documentation, streamlined referral process, efficient staffings, P.R.C. team members, obtaining parental consent/involvement, interventions and alternatives, mobilization of staff, providing service, evaluation of outcomes, closure of service, follow-up.

Documents included in this paper are: Counselor's referral packet, pre-referral screening form to be filled out by student's general education teachers, referral-to-placement flow chart, description of general-education-driven student support service, P.R.C. contract/consent form, P.R.C. summary report form.

Benefits of P.R.C. include: more appropriate referrals, less time in meetings and unnecessary evaluations, improved student academics, reduced numbers of disciplinary cases, improved staff morale, shared responsibility between special and general education, integration of special education expertise into mainstream.

## PRE-REFERRAL CONSULTATION


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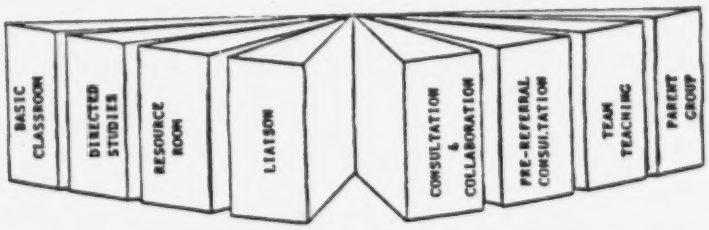



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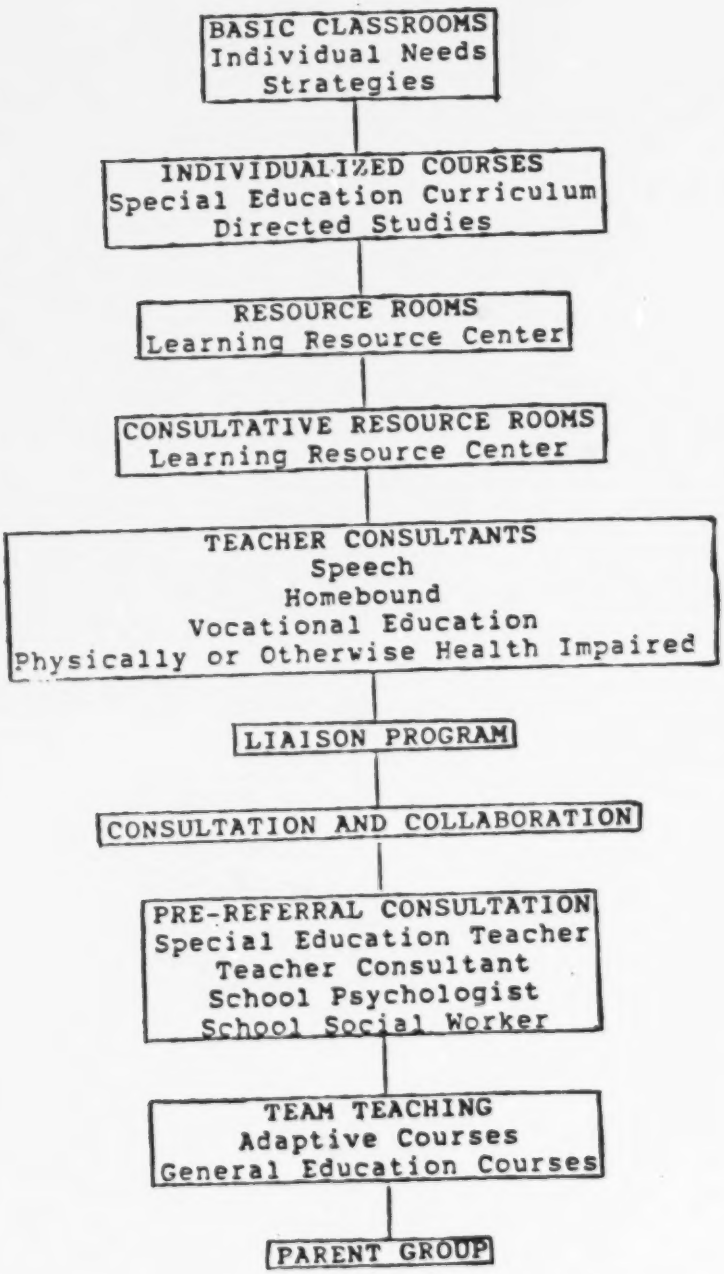
GROVES SPECIAL EDUCATION

AN OUTREACH CONTINUUM OF SERVICE




1.

## Pre-Referral Consultation Program Description

### P.R.C. Defined:

Pre-Referral Consultation is a separate category of student referral through which any person can refer for help any student who may be in crisis, falling through the cracks, a grey-area victim, at-risk, or handicapped.

This is a part of the nation wide trend toward expanding the roles of special education personnel to include integration into the general education system.

P.R.C. is just one of several models designed to strengthen general education to maximize its role in the Least Restrictive Appropriate Environment mandate. Other models include Teacher Assistance Teams (T.A.T.) and Peer Coaching. Groves High School chose the consultation model because of its already strong and effective special ed. team.

P.R.C. is an effective vehicle for carrying out the true spirit of the Regular Education Initiative, which calls for integration of mildly handicapped students into the general ed. system with the support of special education personnel.

### This Model:

This P.R.C. model exists at the secondary level. Other schools in Birmingham operate under a similar service arrangement called the Student Service Center (mostly at the elementary level, but also found at the secondary level).

This model exists within an entire outreach special education program and philosophy, and it is therefore impossible to separate outcome indicators for any one of the many components of the outreach program. Numbers supporting the entire program are available, but should not be considered representative of any single component of the special ed. program.

This is the fourth year our outreach program has been in operation (since 1986).

### Statistics from the Special Education Team:

These outcome indicators represent the total effect of several special ed. and general ed programs (team teaching, liaisoning, consultation and collaboration, ninth grade team, academic support program, pre-referral consultation, etc.):

| School Year: | Tested & Qualified: | Tested & Not Qualified: | Not Tested: | P.R.C.: | Total No. of Referrals: |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 86-87 | 14 | 12 | 18 | 0 | 44 |
| 87-88 | 14 | 6 | 6 | 11 | 37 |
| 88-89 | 9 | 5 | 12 | 15 | 41 |
| 89-90 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 8 | 15 |

2.

## Benefits of Pre-Referral Consultation

The benefits of this proactive approach include:

1. Decreased number of special education evaluation referrals
2. More appropriate referrals
3. Increased cooperation between general education and special education staff
4. Less confusion and less friction between special ed., general ed., and families
5. More efficient staffings
6. Less time spent in meetings
7. Less time wasted in unnecessary evaluations
8. Improved student performance with less intrusion into his/her school life
9. Reduced number of disciplinary referrals to assistant principal
10. Improved student and staff morale
11. Reduced stigma of contact with special ed. personnel
12. Reduced stigma of seeking help (for both kids and adults)
13. Increase consultations between general ed. and special ed. staff
14. Lack of barriers within school programming
15. Sense of shared responsibility for kids between special and general ed.
16. Sense of shared responsibility for kids between school and community agencies/therapists
17. Integration of special ed. expertise and resources into the total life of the school

Examples of P.R.C. Interventions (lasting from 10 days to 10 weeks):

1. Making sense of a confusing school history (especially with students new to the district)
2. Parent interviews/consultations/sessions/groups
3. Short term student counseling
4. Crisis intervention
5. Facilitating re-entry after in-patient chemical dependency treatment; pregancy leave; extended illness
6. Contact with outside agency/therapist
7. Avoiding duplication of actions/services by meeting with all interested parties and drawing up a plan
8. Monitoring a student's academic or behavioral progress (no direct contact)
9. Consulting with general ed. staff to assist in management of a difficult student
10. Short term academic tutoring with special ed. teachers
11. Supporting a student during referral phase who is in intense crisis
12. Assisting a student new to the district adjust to the school
13. Intervening with Conduct Disordered students (don't fit State criteria for EI)
14. Helping "gray area" kids cope with academic demands by teaching learning strategies
15. Helping bilingual kids in the same way stated in #14.
16. Monitoring new ninth graders recently decertified or removed from special ed. at the parent's request at middle school

## Benefits of Pre-Referral Consultation - continued

Key elements to making PRC a success:

1. Communicate with building and distric personnel

   A. Obtain a committement to encourage all school staff to engage in the PRC process

   B. Obtain their committment to assist you in problem-solving and ironing out the bugs of the program

2. Give yourselves time to make the program work

   A. Obtain prep. time (eg. write a State grant to develop the program over the summer...)

   B. Stick with the program for a couple of years. It takes months to see the effects clearly

3. Make sure the PRC Team documents who is doing what and for how long and what the expected outcomes are

4. Reconvene the PRC Team when an intervention isn't working

5. Keep in touch with your referral source; make sure you follow up with them during intervention, at the close of service, and 6 weeks after service has ended

6. Keep feedback channels with general ed. open

7. Follow through with what you promise - this is the best PR move you can make

8. Stay within your State legal guidelines - obtain written consent from parents of kids you intend to serve directly.

## COUNSELORS' EDUCATIONAL REFERRAL PACKET

In order to present a reasonably comprehensive program for the evaluation of each student being recommended for additional services, the following profile packet needs to be completed. The profile packet consists of the following materials:

1. Referral Cover Sheet
2. Counselor's Referral Summary
3. Pre-Referral Screenings filled out by at least four general education teachers
4. Report card and progress reports from previous semester
5. Attendance record
6. Current schedule of classes
7. All previous testing/evaluation data
8. Transcript
9. Standardized test scores
10. Any previous special education paperwork (from CA-60)
11. A record of previous consultations with student - relay what was suggested and what developed
12. A list of intervention strategies that have been used by the counselor and various general education teachers

Normally, all of the above must be documented prior to the Referral Staffing. This packet is to be used by the counselor in order to expedite information required to begin service. Once the counselor forwards this information to the Special Education Department Head, it will be photocopied and distributed to Referral Team members for review prior to the staffing.

5.

SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
GROVES HIGH SCHOOL

REFERRAL FOR SERVICES: Please check one: Pre-referral consultation_____

Special education evaluation_____

Extended illness modified program____

Student's name: _____ Grade: _____

Date of birth: _____ Today's date: _____

REASONS FOR REFERRAL: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____
(signature of referral source)

Staffing date: _____

Referral Committee members: _____

_____

_____

Information reviewed: _____

_____

_____

REFERRAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

****PLEASE TURN THIS FORM IN TO LESLIE THIRJUNG, DEPARTMENT HEAD*****THANK YOU!!****

LT/rw: 5/88

6.

COUNSELOR'S REFERRAL SUMMARY

Student_____ Grade_____ Counselor_____ Date_____

1. Has the student received any special services in the past?

2. Academic History:

3. Social Adjustment:

4. Attendance: (attach current printout or summarize)

5. Family Illnesses:

6. Family Problems:

7. Counselor Interaction with Student, General Ed. Teachers, Parents:

*8. Interventions Used Inside/Outside Groves such as Reading, Testing, Crisis Counselor, Outside Therapy:

*9. What the Family Has Done:

7.

*Please answer #8 and #9 on the reverse side.

PRE-REFERRAL SCREENING

To: _____ Date: _____

From: _____

I will be bringing information on the following student to a Pre-Referral Consultation with the Special Ed Department very soon. The following information is needed to determine the degree of intervention necessary for this student. Thank you for your help.

Student: _____ Class: _____

This student's chief difficulty seems to be: _____

Chief strength(s) _____

Do you feel that supportive help is necessary for this student? _____

Current grade average: _____

Low test scores? _____ Incomplete assignments? _____

Other? _____

Does the student pay attention during lecture? _____

Take notes? _____

Utilize independent work time appropriately? _____

Is the student disruptive? _____ Withdrawn? _____

Please explain: _____

_____

Is the student punctual? _____ In regular attendance? _____

_____

Do you feel that this student is appropriately placed in your class?

_____

Ways you have accommodated this student: _____

_____

Comments: _____

_____

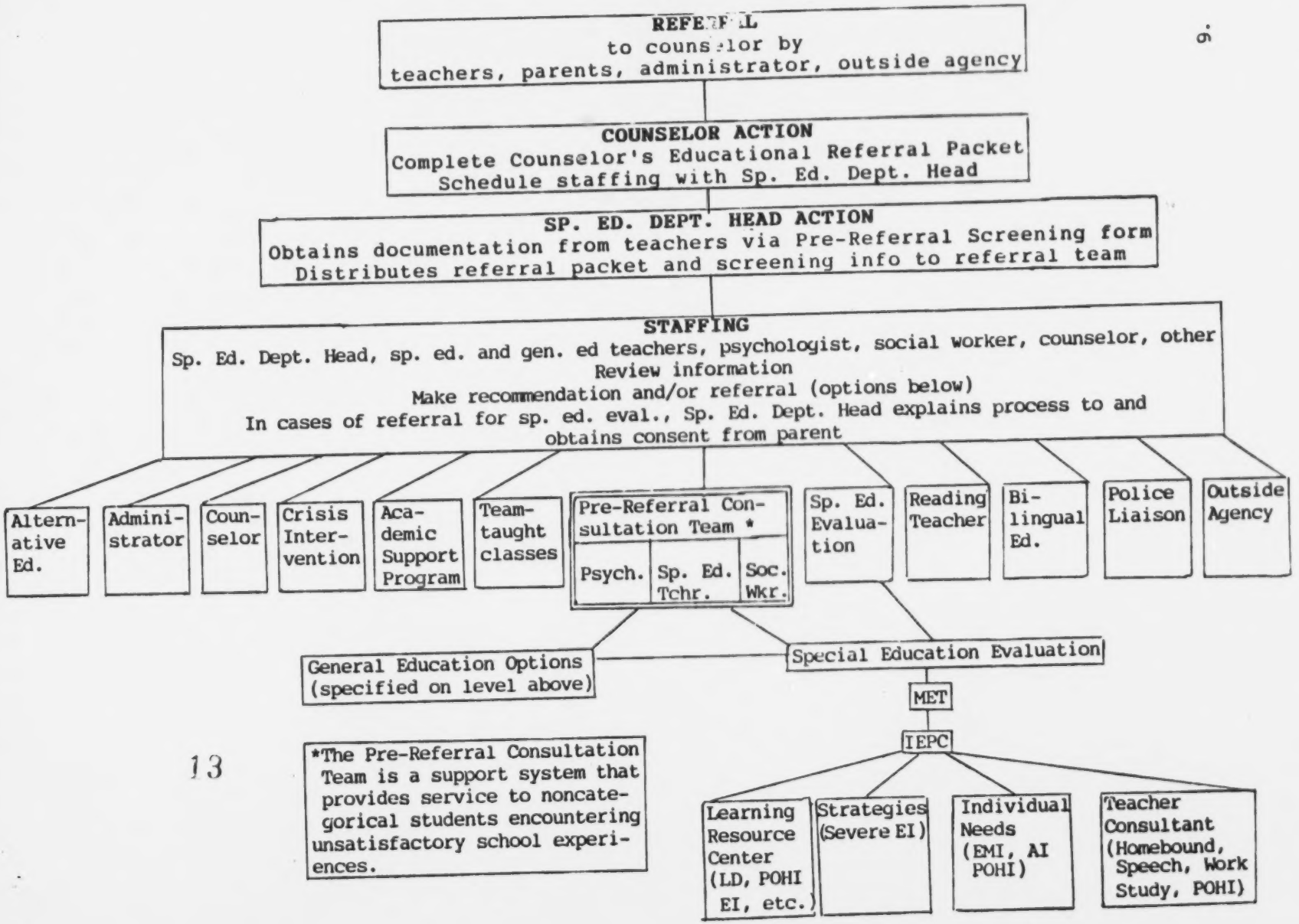
_____

_____

8.

PLEASE RETURN THIS TO ME BY _____

## EDUCATIONAL REFERRAL PLACEMENT CHART


REFERRAL
to counselor by
teachers, parents, administrator, outside agency
COUNSELOR ACTION
Complete Counselor's Educational Referral Packet
Schedule staffing with Sp. Ed. Dept. Head
SP. ED. DEPT. HEAD ACTION
Obtains documentation from teachers via Pre-Referral Screening form
Distributes referral packet and screening info to referral team
STAFFING
Sp. Ed. Dept. Head, sp. ed. and gen. ed teachers, psychologist, social worker, counselor, other
Review information
Make recommendation and/or referral (options below)
In cases of referral for sp. ed. eval., Sp. Ed. Dept. Head explains process to and obtains consent from parent
Alternative Ed.
Administrator
Counselor
Crisis Intervention
Academic Support Program
Team-taught classes
Pre-Referral Consultation Team *
Psych.
Sp. Ed. Tchr.
Soc. Wkr.
Sp. Ed. Evaluation
Reading Teacher
Bi-lingual Ed.
Police Liaison
Outside Agency
General Education Options (specified on level above)
Special Education Evaluation
MET
IEPC
Learning Resource Center (LD, POHI EI, etc.)
Strategies (Severe EI)
Individual Needs (EMI, AI POHI)
Teacher Consultant (Homebound, Speech, Work Study, POHI)

*The Pre-Referral Consultation Team is a support system that provides service to noncategorical students encountering unsatisfactory school experiences.

## ACADEMIC SUPPORT PROGRAM

A General Ed. Option

### Nature of the Service

Students would meet biweekly with a teacher for twenty minute periods. Typically this would include one individual student contact, one small group contact, and one parent phone contact. A teacher caseload would be no more than four students. Adjustment to school, study habits, school progress and personal relationships are key areas where students would receive support. A caring personal interest in each student would occur. Consultation with the student's teachers, counselor and parents would be ongoing over a semester period.

The primary responsibility for the identification and placement of students would be the counselor's. Criteria for selection would include:

1. Need for additional personal attention and support

2. Grade level - 9th = 1st priority
   12th = 2nd priority
   10th/11th = 3rd priority

3. Unavailability of other services (i.e., private counseling, special education)

4. Willingness of student to accept help

5. Degree of present support from family, peers, adults

6. Learning capacity and intelligence will **not** be a factor

Typical candidates would be students:
- returning to school after a major absence
- needing and wanting more regularly scheduled assistance
- exhibiting a major change in attitude and performance
- not qualified for special ed, but exhibiting self-defeating behavior
- having difficulty adjusting to high school
- with good ability but poor school performance

### Role of the Counselor

Identify candidates
Explain program to parents and students
Place students
Maintain contact with Academic Support Teacher
Evaluate student progress in program

Role of the Academic Support Teacher

Meet with counselor for background history
Meet with student twice a week
Monitor academic progress
Refer to Crisis Intervention Counselor as needed
Provide a liaison between home and school

Role of Crisis Intervention Counselor

The Crisis Intervention Counselor would be available to students and the Academic Support Teacher if assistance is needed to help students resolve feelings attributed to a major life crisis such as divorce, separation, substance abuse, child abuse, social rejection and family conflicts. The Crisis Intervention Counselor meets with individuals and groups for a short or long duration.

Coordinator - Kathryn Webster, Counselor

GROVES SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

PRE-REFERRAL AND CONSULTATION SERVICES

STUDENT _____ BIRTHDATE _____

GRADE _____ STAFFING DATE _____

COUNSELOR _____ PSYCHOLOGIST _____

LRC TEACHER _____ OTHER _____

SOCIAL WORKER _____

SCHOOL SITUATION _____

_____

_____

_____

PROPOSED INTERVENTION _____

_____

_____

_____

DURATION OF PLAN _____

I am aware of the school situation as presented. I agree that my son/daughter may work with the special education staff in the proposed plan.

_____

Parent/Guardian Signature

I am not in agreement with the proposed plan.

_____

Parent/Guardian Signature

_____ ____ Approve ____ Disapprove

Principal's Signature

_____ ____ Approve ____ Disapprove

Department Head Signature

12.

GROVES SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

PRE-REFERRAL AND CONSULTATION SERVICES

SUMMARY REPORT

STUDENT _____

DATE _____

DATE SERVICE ENDED _____

INTERVENTIONS:

PRESCRIPTIVE PLANS FOR GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM:

SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER _____

SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT HEAD _____

COUNSELOR _____

PRINCIPAL _____

ITINERANT STAFF _____

PARENT CONTACT _____

STUDENT _____

13.

SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
GROVES HIGH SCHOOL

REFERRAL FOR SERVICES: Please check one: Pre-referral consultation X (2)

Special education evaluation X (1)

Extended illness modified program ____

Student's name: Karen Grade: 10

Date of birth: 2/13/72 Today's date: 11/5/88

REASONS FOR REFERRAL: Karen has been dropped from 3 classes and is headed for being a dropout; She has significant difficulty with comprehension in general and feels powerless to take control over her life.. I see warning signs of serious depression and inability to make appropriate decisions. The record shows she has been referred before but the reason for denial of service makes not sense to me. Karen needs massive support.

J. Counselor
(signature of referral source)

Staffing date: 11-21-88

Referral Committee members: M. (psych.), J. (counselor), G. (sp. ed. tchr.), L. (sp. ed. dept. head), D. (sch. social worker).

Information reviewed: Pre-referral Screenings; former evals, MET's and IEPC's; report card; attendance; counselor input; standardized test data; Alternative School report.

REFERRAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS: M. Psych will get consent and release of records signed then mtg. w/ parent ASAP. Rule out chemical abuse + need for drug testing. M. Psych will share data w/ D. Worker for his involvement. 12/88 - Mo. cancelled mtg. w/ M. Psych + D. Worker - rescheduled for 1/5/89. Karen has just begun therapy. 2/3/89 - J. Teacher sees Karen on P.R.C. 4th Mo. has testing completed. M. Psych. contacts Mo. for update. 2/23/89 - Mo. hasn't tested yet.

****PLEASE TURN THIS FORM IN TO LESLIE THIRJUNG, DEPARTMENT HEAD*****THANK YOU!!****

LT/rw: 5/88

14.

COUNSELOR'S REFERRAL SUMMARY

Student Karen Grade 10 Counselor J. Counselor Date 11/5/88

1. Has the student received any special services in the past?
Tested but services denied

2. Academic History: 6.5 credits over 2 years (3.5 of which are alternative school credits). No grade above D+

3. Social Adjustment:
poor. Karen has divorced herself from old friends so she could get her life straight. New friendship patterns haven't taken place

4. Attendance: (attach current printout or summarize)

5. Family Illnesses:

6. Family Problems:
Difficult Divorce

7. Counselor Interaction with Student, General Ed. Teachers, Parents:
Initiated CEA Support service - Many teacher has contacted Karen. Karen was willing to participate but follow through with appointments looks unlikely.

*8. Interventions Used Inside/Outside Groves such as Reading, Testing, Crisis Counselor, Outside Therapy:
Outside therapy terminated - looking for new therapist. Karen's needs are beyond Crisis Counseling or alternative school

*9. What the Family Has Done:
Outside therapy. Presently me and mother (Mrs. Mother) would like good recommendations for a female therapist. Mother aware and concerned.

*Please answer #8 and #9 on the reverse side. 15.

PRE-REFERRAL SCREENING

To: Both Teacher Date: 11-7-88

From: S. Ed. Head

I will be bringing information on the following student to a Pre-Referral Consultation with the Special Ed Department very soon. The following information is needed to determine the degree of intervention necessary for this student. Thank you for your help.

Student: Karen Class: 6 Math

This student's chief difficulty seems to be: attendance - 7 days absent this marking period

Chief strength(s) She can do the work if she is in class.

Do you feel that supportive help is necessary for this student? yes

Current grade average: 38.75 95, 94, 92, 0, 29, 0, 0, 0 These were when she was coming to school

Low test scores? ✓ Incomplete assignments? ✓

Other? She is going to fail this marking period.

Does the student pay attention during lecture? when she is there

Take notes? seldom

Utilize independent work time appropriately? when she is there

Is the student disruptive? no Withdrawn? somewhat

Please explain: very quiet - seldom speaks to the other students

Is the student punctual? no In regular attendance? no

Do you feel that this student is appropriately placed in your class?

yes

Ways you have accommodated this student: she can't succeed with her attendance pattern.

Comments: Karen would succeed if she was in regular attendance.

16.

PLEASE RETURN THIS TO ME BY 11/9 Wed

PRE-REFERRAL SCREENING

To: Ind Teacher Date: 11-7-88

From: S. Ed. Head

I will be bringing information on the following student to a Pre-Referral Consultation with the Special Ed Department very soon. The following information is needed to determine the degree of intervention necessary for this student. Thank you for your help.

Student: Karen Class: Living Skills 2A

This student's chief difficulty seems to be: MISSING CLASS (17 ABSENCES)

Chief strength(s) _____

Do you feel that supportive help is necessary for this student? YES

Current grade average: C

Low test scores? _____ Incomplete assignments? _____

Other? _____

Does the student pay attention during lecture? YES

Take notes? _____

Utilize independent work time appropriately? YES

Is the student disruptive? NO Withdrawn? YES

Please explain: SHE NEVER TALKS WITH ANYONE. SHE WOULDN'T TALK TO ME UNLESS I STARTED.

Is the student punctual? NO In regular attendance? NO

Do you feel that this student is appropriately placed in your class?

YES

Ways you have accommodated this student: I FEEL SHE COULD DO MUCH BETTER. I GAVE HER A "C" IN HOPES IT WOULD INSPIRE HER

Comments: SHE HAS MOOD SWINGS. ONCE IN A WHILE SHE DRESSES UP AND LOOKS GREAT AND EVEN TALKS TO PEOPLE + LAUGHS. MOST OF THE TIME SHE SEEMS DEPRESSED.

PLEASE RETURN THIS TO ME BY Wed 11/9

17.

GROVES SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

PRE-REFERRAL AND CONSULTATION SERVICES

CONFIDENTIAL

STUDENT Karen BIRTHDATE 2/13/72

GRADE 10 STAFFING DATE 1/30/89

COUNSELOR T. Counselor PSYCHOLOGIST S. Bychdogist

LRC TEACHER S. Ed. Teacher OTHER Sp. Ed. Dept. Chair

SOCIAL WORKER S. Worker

SCHOOL SITUATION Karen was dropped from several classes first semester, and earned only ½ credit toward graduation. She appears to have significant difficulty with comprehension in general (according to teacher and counselor observations). School staff note signs of depression and the inability to make appropriate decisions. Karen was referred for sp. ed., and evaluated, in 11/86. Her case is being reconsidered.

PROPOSED INTERVENTION Mr. Counsdohas indicated that Karen shows interest in receiving support through the Learning Resource Center program. Because she is amenable to receving help, and because this is the beginning of a new semester, it is considered most beneficial to provide service via daily L.R.C. support hours while Karen's case is in review.

DURATION OF PLAN Six weeks or the duration of the review process.

I am aware of the school situation as presented. I agree that my ~~son~~/daughter may work with the special education staff in the proposed plan.

X Mrs. Mother
Parent/Guardian Signature

I am not in agreement with the proposed plan.

Parent/Guardian Signature

J. Principal ✓ Approve ___ Disapprove
Principal's Signature

S. Ed. Head ✓ Approve ___ Disapprove
Department Head Signature

18.

GROVES SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

PRE-REFERRAL AND CONSULTATION SERVICES

SUMMARY REPORT

STUDENT Karen

DATE 4-29-89

DATE SERVICE ENDED 4-20-89

INTERVENTIONS:

Karen was referred for special ed. eval. on 11-5-88. Her mother preferred to obtain an outside evaluation from the agency where Karen had been in therapy. Despite repeated contact with Mrs. Mother by School Psychologist, by 1-20-89 the evaluation had still not been completed. Since the second semester was under way, and Karen indicated some interest in receiving help in school, a second referral, this time for P.R.C., was filed.
Beginning 1-30-89, daily contact with Sp. Ed. Teacher through P.R.C. aimed to tutor Karen in her general ed. coursework, and provide social-emotional guidance in hopes of stabilizing Karen's attendance. Karen, however, attended P.R.C. only occasionally. She terminated therapy at this time. Over the next month, she was dropped-due-to-excessive-truancies from four courses. Repeated contact with Mrs. Mother by Sp. Ed. Teacher resulted in her agreement to allow Groves to complete

PRESCRIPTIVE PLANS FOR GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM:

(interventions - cont.) Karen's special ed. al. Documentation of Karen's depression and her pervasive inability to make appropriate decisions was accomplished through the P.R.C. process.

Karen remained unresponsive to interventions while attending P.R.C., but once she formally entered the special ed. program on 4-20-89, her attendance stabilized. We have drawn up a contract regarding behavioral expectations in Math class, and it has thus far been effective. See Sp. Ed. Teacher for more details.

SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER S. Ed. Teacher

SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT HEAD S. Ed. Head

COUNSELOR J. Counselor

PRINCIPAL J. Principal

ITINERANT STAFF S. Psychologist

PARENT CONTACT Mrs. Mother

STUDENT Karen

19.